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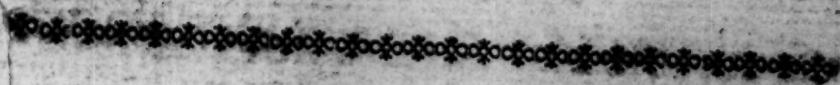
FOUNDED UPON REAL FACTS,

Between Mrs. CLINKER and Miss MARTHA STEADY.

By R^d Hill Esq^r

— If the cap fits, put it on

By R^d Hill Esq^r

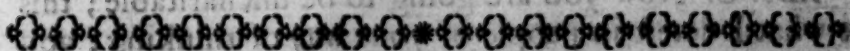


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MAW
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A D I A L O G U E

Between Mrs. Clinker and Miss Martha Steady.

Mrs. C. SO Miss *Patty*! You have made a fine piece of work on't; I hear our famous new preacher Mr. *Jewel* (a) has persuaded you to change your religion, and to turn Methodist. — Believe me there's talk enough about it.

Miss S. I wonder, Madam, that a person of my insignificance should be the cause of so much conversation: and as to what is reported of my having chang'd my religion, I can only say that it is impossible for me to have chang'd that which I never had.

Mrs. C. Lord child! don't talk such nonsense, I am sure you were always good enough before you ever heard any of these canting sort of preachers.

Miss S. Pray Ma'am by what rule cou'd you form any judgment of my goodness?

Mrs. C. Why nobody was more constant at church and sacrament than yourself; nobody more ready to do a charitable action when it was in your power; and nobody more universally well spoken of by all the world.

Miss S. These I apprehend are no scriptural proofs that I was in the right way to heaven, for we are told by an authority more than human, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God (b); and that we may give all our goods to feed the poor, and yet have no charity at all (c). — 'Tis true indeed, I was a constant attender at church; but I am forced to own that tho' I drew nigh unto God with my lips, my heart was far from him: and indeed it is too common a case to see hundreds who make a point of going every day within the church walls——

A

Mrs. C.

(a) A Descendant from that venerable Prelate Bishop *Jewel*.

(b) James iv. 4.

(c) 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

Mrs. C. Now you are going to be uncharitable; this is what I detest in people of your way of thinking; you will allow none to be right but yourselves.

Miss S. Nay, my dear *Mrs. Clinker*, only hear me out with patience, and if there's any want of charity in the supposition, I have a right to retort it upon you: don't you remember that you told me yourself no longer since than Thursday last, that tho' old *Mrs. Trimwell* and *Mrs. Mary Save-all* never miss'd weekly prayers nor monthly sacrament; yet that the one was so miserably covetous that nobody could live with her, and the other scolded her servants to such a degree that they were for ever complaining of her bad tempers? And you said at the same time that *Lady Gamble*, who constantly sits in the same pew with you, makes no scruple of looking over her adversary's hand at cards, and is so much out of humour whenever she loses a shilling, that it is quite disagreeable to play with her; and whenever she wins she will never own it.

Mrs. C. I fancy Miss if we were to search narrowly into the lives of some who make high pretensions to saintship, we shou'd find 'em not much better than their neighbours: and to tell you the truth, I believe they are all a parcel of designing hypocrites, and I think if they had their deserts, they ought to be well —

Miss S. Softly, softly, good *Mrs. Clinker*, who is uncharitable now?—It is too true, and with sorrow I confess that some who have made great pretensions to religion, have disgraced their holy profession by not living agreeably to it; but is this any proof that none are sincere? the scriptures tell us that offences of this sort will come, and that they must needs afford matter of stumbling to the world; but still the religion of the gospel is the same, however unworthy of it any of its professors may behave themselves: surely you won't say that because there is counterfeit coin there is therefore no real gold

gold; or because Judas was a traitor, that all the other apostles were so likewise.

Mrs. C. Oh! but you have so many disputes among yourselves, that it is enough to make one conclude it is impossible to know what is truth; and therefore for my own part I assure you I shall always continue in the way that I was brought up.

Miss S. In the common affairs of life, we think that which is not worth disputing about is not worth having; and we have an apostle's command to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints whenever that faith is attacked by men of pernicious principles who would corrupt the word of God, and handle it deceitfully: but it is a singular proof of the truth and power of real christianity, that in spite of all the opposition and prejudices which are raised against it, it still makes its way into the heart, and breaks through every intervening cloud and obstacle. — But methinks we have a little departed from our subject; if I remember right, you mentioned Mr. *Jewel's* name when you first came in: pray did you ever hear him?

Mrs. C. No thank God: and I can tell you moreover that good Mr. *Stiff*, Mr. and Mrs. *Screwup*, Sir *Gilbert Guttle*, the Widow *Fondle*, old Lady Dowager *Crabstock*, Miss *Giggle*, Mrs. *Mamille*, Mrs. *Bridger Spade*, Miss *Fanny Painter*, and I know not how many more of the very best in the parish are resolved never to go within side of the church, so long as he continues there.

Miss S. Surely Mrs. *Chinker* it shews great want of candor to condemn any man unheard.

Mrs. C. But you know very well what an uproar there is, and what divisions are made in families by his preaching, insomuch that the pulpits ring again. I'm sure I wish he had never come here disturbing the peace of a quiet congregation.

Miss S. Yes, yes, I doubt not but their Reverences have been furbishing up their armour and preparing their

their ammunition ever since they heard of Mr. *Jewel's* presentation : and truly they never preach with any degree of life and spirit but when they are opposing the zealous ministers of Christ.—But pardon me my good friend, if I say that your objections are quite unreasonable : when our Lord himself was upon earth there was much division because of him ; for some said he is a good man, others nay, but he deceiveth the people (*d*) ; and as it was then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now (*e*). True religion, as I remark'd before, has numberless prejudices to fight against, and we are apt to steel our hearts against its impressions, because it wou'd rob us of those pleasures and idols which promise us a deceptive happiness here below ; and among the many charges which are brought against the faithful ministers of the gospel, there is none more frequent than that they are movers of sedition, pestilent fellows (*f*), and disturbers of domestic peace. When the apostle Paul first delivered his message at Thessalonica we read that the whole city was in an uproar, and that the mob assaulted the house where they supposed he was harbour'd, and drew out certain of the brethren, crying out, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also (*g*). Jesus himself has also told us that he came not to send peace on the earth but rather division ; that five in one house shou'd be divided, three against two, and two against three, the father against the son, the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law, and that a man's greatest foes shou'd be those of his own household (*h*).

Mrs. C. I well remember hearing a sermon upon those very words, and the minister told us that all such texts of scripture related to the primitive ages of the church, and

(*d*) John vii. 12. (*e*) Gal. iv. 29. (*f*) Acts xxiv. 5.

(*g*) Acts xvii. 5, 6. (*h*) Mat. x. 34. Luke xii. 51, 52, 53.

and that now christianity is establish'd, *it is attended with ease and honour*, and that all opposition to it is ceas'd.

Miss S. Where real christianity is establish'd in the heart and life of any person, in such an one this opposition is ceas'd indeed; but there are many devices of men which go under the name of christianity, and are made so palatable to our corrupt reason, and to the self-righteous pride of our hearts, and withal appear so specious to our natural ideas of religion, that we easily swallow the gilded bait, and often receive that for truth which only leads us further and further from it. — I agree with you that this smooth insipid kind of religion will never meet with any opposition whatever: but when the gospel is preach'd in its life and power, when the depths of the fallen nature are faithfully open'd, when man is stripp'd of all his fancied excellencies, when he is held forth to view in the language of scripture as guilty, helpless, miserable, blind and naked; when he is told that he hath neither wisdom, righteousness, sanctification nor redemption but in and through Christ Jesus; when he is boldly admonish'd of the utter impossibility of reconciling God and Mammon; when his ears are made to tingle with that unwelcome but apostolic declaration, "Whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God (*i*); " I say when these grand truths are honestly applied to the consciences of the hearers, then great offence will always be taken, especially by those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

Mrs. C. Really Miss you run on very glibly; I find Mr. *Fewel* is now become your oracle; but however you may be captivated with his long extempore harangues, and his theatrical gestures, I shall always be much better pleas'd with a good, sober, moral discourse.

Miss S. Indeed my dear Mrs. *Clinker*, I make no man my oracle but so far as he speaks agreeable to the oracles of God: and with regard to what you have thought proper

proper to stile *long extempore harangues and theatrical gestures*, if it be a receiv'd maxim that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, then, where the preacher's heart is really season'd with grace, there will be no need of the black manuscript book, or of Doctor *Trussler's* copper-plates (*k*): But it is a fine easy way of proceeding for a minister to get fifty-two old sermons, with two or three more for the great festivals, and to mumble these over and over and over to the same congregation (perhaps now and then changing the texts) for years and years together, and when he is thus set up with one twelvemonth's stock in trade, he may then spend his leisure time as most suits his own inclination.

Mrs. C. Fie *Patty*, you are absolutely quite severe and satirical.

Miss S. Not at all Madam. I am far from condemning all written sermons, tho' you are pleas'd to condemn all extempore ones; but this I must say, that I shou'd have a very mean opinion of my lawyer, and shou'd think he had not enter'd very deeply into the merits of my cause, if he cou'd not plead for me without having all he said written down before him; neither shou'd I think that man a very able speaker in the house of commons, who cou'd proceed on his subject no longer than whilst his speech was before his eyes.—In every station of life we think that whosoever is acquainted with his profession, shou'd be sensibly affected with the importance of what he is engaged in; hence the music-master (especially if he have the direction of a concert) seems to strain every nerve of his body, and to have all the powers of his soul call'd forth into action, not only because he himself sensibly feels the force of harmony, but because he wishes his auditory shou'd be alike touch'd with the pleasing sound. Shall then the lawyer, the senator,

(*k*) Dr. *Trussler* in his Address to the Clergy proposes to furnish them with sermons printed by copper-plates in such manner as not to be distinguishable from written hand.

nator, the musician, be so zealously affected about the things of time and sense, and shall the ambassadors of the King of kings, the heralds of the Lord of hosts, who are appointed to proclaim glad tidings of great joy to lost sinners, shall they who deliver the message of God to man speak in a cold unaffecting manner, as if neither they themselves nor any of their hearers had the least concern in the subject? It cannot be: and therefore the Lord Jehovah commanded his prophets of old to cry aloud and not spare, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and to smite with their hand (l); and as if that were not sufficient to prove their earnestness, to stamp with their foot (m), that they might shew the people their transgression, and point out to them the way of hope and deliverance. But alas! how is all zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls now condemn'd as frenzy and enthusiasm; and whilst so few ministers speak from the heart themselves, how is it possible they shou'd speak to the hearts of their hearers? but as soon as they have mutter'd over the last page of their ditty, what can we expect but that they shou'd fall into worldly trifling discourse with their congregations even at the church door, and that the congregation themselves, instead of asking one another in the language of the disciples going to Emmaus, did not our hearts burn within us while he open'd to us the scriptures (n)? shou'd begin talking over all the miseries and follies of their neighbours, and perhaps expressing their deep concern that they want a fourth to make up a private party at quadrille the next evening; whereas if they had been at a playhouse they wou'd not have fail'd to have spoken of all that they had seen and heard. And this puts me in mind of that well known answer of Mr. Betterton the player to a great dignitary of the church, when he ask'd Mr. Betterton what cou'd be the reason that tho' the players spoke of imaginary things and the clergy of real ones, yet an audience was generally much more affected with a play than with a sermon &c. My

“ Lord,

(l) Is. lviii. 1. (m) Ezek. vi. 11. (n) Luke xxiv. 32.

“ Lord, replied Mr. *Betterton*, I apprehend the reason
 “ to be this, that we players speak of imaginary things
 “ as if they were *real*, whereas too many of the clergy
 “ speak of *real* things as if they were *imaginary*.”

“ *Mrs. C.* Monstrous ! Girl, will you never have done ?
 Do you suppose that Mr. *Jewel* knows better than so
 many great Divines who are twice his age ? or do you
 think that there was no religion in the town till he came
 among us ?

“ *Miss S.* Truly Mrs. *Clinker* I am not for making in-
 vectives, or throwing out personal reflections, however
 ’tis an happiness that the word of God has given us some
 unerring marks whereby to know who are the true, and
 who the pretended ministers of Christ.

“ *Mrs. C.* Pray Miss what are those marks ?

“ *Miss S.* By the doctrines they preach, and by the lives
 they lead. — Besides that in all ages the true ministers
 have been few in number, and have always met with
 contempt and reproach by those who rejected their mes-
 sage ; whilst the false prophets were many in number,
 and lived in ease and good repute among those who were
 deceived by them. Hence God complain’d by the mouth
 of his faithful messenger Jeremiah, saying, the prophets
 prophecy falsely, and the people love to have it so : and
 our blessed Lord himself in his sermon upon the mount
 says, “ Woe be unto you when all men shall speak well
 of you, for so did your fathers of the false prophets ; but,
 blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they
 shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach
 you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of
 Man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy ; for
 behold, your reward is great in heaven ; for in the like
 manner did their fathers unto the prophets (o).” That
 is, unto the *true* prophets as put in contradistinction to
 the *false* prophets mention’d in the verse before quoted.

“ *Mrs. C.* But I desire to know by what rule you judge
 that Mr. *Jewel*’s doctrine is sound and true ?

Miss S.

Miss S. First, by bringing it to the only touchstone of truth and falsehood, the word of God.—Secondly, by comparing it with an authority which I hope always to esteem next to the scripture itself, the church of England in her liturgy, articles, and homilies.

Mrs. C. Articles and *homilies*! what are those? I confess I never read them, and don't recollect that I ever heard of them.

Miss S. The articles and homilies are our grand bulwarks against Popery; they contain all the fundamental truths of the reformation; and no minister can be ordained in the church of England without making the most solemn declaration and subscription that he believes them *from his heart*, to be perfectly agreeable to the word of God; and that he will never preach any other doctrine than that which is contain'd in them; and every clergyman who does preach any other doctrine, is liable to be excommunicated and suspended by the bishop, until he repent of his wicked errors (*p*).

Mrs. C. Pray let me hear what those doctrines are.

Miss S. They set forth to us the true nature of God, that he exists in three distinct persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and that these three are one; that is, one in nature and in essence. They insist universally upon the Divinity and Godhead of Christ: They teach that man is fallen from his original state of innocence, and that all the faculties of his soul are so disorder'd by sin, that he hath neither will nor power to recover himself: That salvation is by grace through faith only, and not of works: That all works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of his spirit, are not pleasant and acceptable to God; but that where there is true and living faith in the heart, it will be as evidently discern'd by the good works which it produces, as a tree is known by its fruits (*q*).

Mrs. C. Are these indeed the doctrines of the established church? B *Miss S.*

Miss S. They certainly are ; and of every other protestant church whatever : nay, there is not a petition which the minister puts up from the desk, not a collect throughout the whole book of common prayer, but what breathes the same humbling language, and in which we do not confess either directly or indirectly that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves—that we put not our trust in any thing that we do—that without God's holy inspiration we cannot so much as think a good thought ; and that we are accounted righteous before God *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings.

Mrs. C. To be sure no man, unless he has a fear'd conscience, will ever subscribe to what he does not believe, meerly for the sake of getting the church's emoluments ; and it is also certain that the prayers and the sermon ought to harmonize together, and yet I cannot say that I ever remember to have heard the doctrines of Christ's divinity, the total corruption of human nature, salvation by grace, and, what you call, the work of the spirit upon the soul, much insisted upon by our own minister ; and to deal plainly with you, *Miss Patty*, nothing wou'd be more disgusting to me than to hear so much about the *Spirit*, and about *inspiration*, as I look upon every thing of this sort to be little better than cant and enthusiasm.

Miss S. In whatever light you may look upon it, we have the voice of an apostle on our side when we assert, " That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his (*r*) : " and if it be cant and enthusiasm to expect the illumination, comforts, and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, then you yourself pray'd no less than ten times in the church service last Sunday morning that you might be a *canting enthusiast*.

Mrs. C. If I do all that our minister tells me to do,

I believe I shall stand a very good chance for all that ; and if I am not safe ; God help a many !

Miss S. When obedience flows from the principle of faith working by love, it is certainly pleasing and acceptable to God ; but if you were to keep the whole law in order to entitle you to heaven, and yet fail in one point, whether in thought, word, or deed, you wou'd lie under the sentence of God's wrath, and be for ever shut out from all hope of being saved by your own doings : for thus it is written, Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all (*s*) : and again, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them (*t*). Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh living be justified (*u*).

Mrs. C. Heighy, tighty, Miss ! why you have got scripture at your finger's end : to be sure you have been finely tutor'd for so short a time ; but if I can't be sav'd by doing my best, how am I to be sav'd at all ?

Miss S. By believing in Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (*v*).

Mrs. C. What then do you take me for a Jew, a Turk, or an Heathen ? I tell you I *always* believ'd in Jesus Christ.

Miss S. It is an observation of the pious and learned Bishop *Reynolds*, that " there are no such *bad* believers as those who think they were *always* believers : " and indeed there is a wide difference between the faith of custom and education, and that faith which is the gift of God, and the work of his spirit in the heart ; the former is common to all who profess themselves christians ; the latter is only to be found in those who have felt the burden of sin, and who under a deep sense of their lost estate both by nature and by practice, have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel of peace and salvation.

B 2

Mrs. C.

(*s*) James ii. 10. (*t*) Gal. iii. 10. (*u*) Gal. ii. 16. (*v*) Gal. iii. 13.

Mrs. C. I don't like carrying on the dispute with you, but I'm resolv'd you shall never persuade me to turn.

Miss S. You grieve me exceedingly, dear Madam, to see you so much prejudiced, and still harping upon the same string. — I declare I know not what you mean by *turning*: however as you yourself have mention'd the expression, permit me in few words to tell you what sort of *turning* the scripture makes essentially necessary, namely, a turning from nature to grace; from sin to holiness. In this sense of the word our excellent church teaches us to offer up our supplications that “the hearts of the disobedient may be *turned* to the wisdom of the just;” and in the service for Ash Wednesday we each pray for ourselves, “*turn* thou us O good Lord, and so shall we be *turned*.”

Mrs. C. I tell you once more, that I *hope* I shall get to heaven as well as those who make so much ado about it: so pray let us change the subject or I must go.

Miss S. Do, let me intreat you to sit down quietly a little longer, and suffer me to observe in answer to what you say, that there are two sorts of *hope* mention'd in scripture, the hope of the hypocrite or self-deceiver, which shall perish (*w*); and that lively hope full of immortality, which purifieth the soul, and which maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost (*x*). This is that glorious, well grounded hope which I sincerely pray may be yours, and which shall never fail, till both faith and hope are swallow'd up in everlasting love.

Mrs. C. For my part I wish to have every thing go on in peace.

Miss S. So does the common enemy of souls. — Pardon the force of my expression, but as it is founded upon scripture I cou'd not help speaking plainly: for we read in the xith chapter of St. Luke, that when a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him

(*w*) Job viii. 13.

(*x*) Rom. v. 5.

him and overcome him he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils. Now by the strong man is *Satan* evidently pointed out in the context, and by the stronger man Jesus Christ is as clearly set forth. Here then I must take the liberty of observing that as there are two sorts of *faith* and two sorts of *hope*, so there are two sorts of *peace* mention'd in the word of God: the one is that wretched security which rests upon every heart of man by nature, and is represented under the striking images of *sleep*, *darkness*, and even of *death* itself: Hence that call of the apostle, in which all these three images are implied, "Awake thou that *sleepest* and arise from the *dead* , and Christ shall give thee *light* (y)." This then is that false peace which the prince of this world wishes never to have disturb'd, and which universally prevails over all those who thank God that their consciences were never uneasy about sin. — But there is another sort of peace, even that peace which Jesus bequeath'd as a dying legacy to his sorrowing disciples, when he said, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you (z)." This is that true solid peace which the world can neither give, nor take away; a peace which is the effect of a lively faith in Jesus Christ, and of which St. Paul bears this strong testimony, "That it passeth all understanding." — The worst wish I harbour in my heart towards dear Mrs. *Clinker*, is, that she may speedily be made partaker of it.

Mrs. C. Thank you my dear, but I am very well satisfied with myself already. — Pray what do you think became of all the people who died in L——r before this preaching about faith and regeneration came? Do you suppose they are all damn'd?

Miss S. God forbid that I shou'd pass sentence upon any person whatever; for tho' it is certain that where the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch (a); yet at all times and in all places, every soul that is really converted to God and chang'd by grace, shall in the end in-

(y) Eph. v. 14. (z) John xiv. 27. (a) Mat. xv. 14.

inherit everlasting life. But I am sorry you have no better argument to produce than that which is in the mouth of every bigotted Romish priest, "Where was your religion (say they to the Protestants) before *Luther's* and *Calvin's* time," and "what is become of all the people, say you, who died in L—r before this preaching came?"

Mrs. C. All I meant was to express my dislike of innovations.

Miss S. Nobody I assure you can more seriously lament the innovations which have crept into the doctrine, discipline, and practice of the christian church than myself; yet from the very same principles as you now argue, the Papists at the time of the reformation reproach'd the Protestants, and call'd them "the men of the new religion;" whereas in truth their religion was the pure religion of the bible, long before the corruptions of popery had any existence. — But so it is, that when truth has been long banish'd, and error has been long prevalent, no sooner does the former attempt to recover her place, than the latter most impudently denies her the pre-eminence, or because she may have been for a few years in exile, or a stranger, even dares to affirm that her origin is spurious, and to treat her as an intruder.

Mrs. C. What is all this to the purpose?

Miss S. I presume it is very much to the purpose; because thousands in this land, tho' reform'd as to some superstitious ceremonies, are nevertheless sunk into the very dregs of popish doctrine, without so much as suspecting it; and tho' Bible, Articles, Homilies, and the whole church of England liturgy are point blank against them, yet they as readily swallow down the proud, anti-christian, jesuitical tenets of free-will, man's merit, two-fold justification, and even of sinless perfection, as if they were the genuine growth of scripture and of protestantism; whereas in truth and in fact they are some of the rankest weeds of the popish and pelagian dunghill.

Mrs. C. Hey-day, Miss! I fancy you intend to take Orders soon.

Miss S.

Miss S. The subject we are upon, *Mrs. Clinker*, is of too important a nature to be put off with a sneer. I pretend not to argue with you as a *divine*, but as a *christian*; and under this character, it is incumbent upon you, upon me, and upon all who profess the name of Christ, to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in us (*b*).—Surely in a matter on which my eternal salvation depends, it wou'd argue the most extravagant folly to be able to assign no other cause why I call myself a *christian*, than because my father and grandfather were so before me; nor why I am a *protestant*, than because I was born in the island of *Great Britain*. Upon the very same principles, had I been born in *Japan* I must have been an *heathen*; had I been born in *Turkey* I shou'd have been a *mahometan*; and had I been born in *France*, *Spain*, *Italy*, or *Portugal*, I must have been a *romanist*: and every pagan, mussulman, or papist, might give as good a reason why they are any of the three.

Mrs. C. Not to hold any further dispute on that point, I must now mention an objection which I have very often heard brought against Mr. *Jewel*, particularly by my very good friends Mr. *Canon Temple* and old Lady *Church*, as also by Mr. *Bishop*, Mrs. *Chancel*, and Doctor *Steepleton*. It is, that he is a very great favourer of the dissenters, many of whom it is notorious come frequently to hear him.

Miss S. Mr. *Jewel* is a man of a candid benevolent temper, who hates all narrowness and bigotry of spirit; and tho' as a minister of the establishment he bears a particular attachment to the church of England, yet he loves all sincere christians, by whatever denomination they may be distinguished, and has the happiness of being loved by them in return. And if some worthy persons among the dissenters come often to hear him, surely this is a good proof of *their* catholicism, and cannot justly be made a matter of objection against *him*; for which of the two is the best friend of the church, he who by preaching

preaching unsound doctrine drives his hearers from the church to the dissenters, or he who by faithfully declaring the whole council of God, brings the dissenters from the meeting to the church?

Mrs. C. I confess the objection appeared to me rather frivolous when I first heard it mentioned, and now you have intirely convinced me that it is so.

Miss S. I am happy to find you so ingenuous my dear friend, and since we are upon the subject, permit me to observe concerning dissenters that we ought always to rank them into two classes, viz. those who *dissent* in some essential points of faith, and those who *dissent* only in some little circumstantial matters of external worship and discipline. The former are the *dangerous dissenters*, and we ought the more to be on our guard against them; because legions of them who love the church's preferences, much better than her doctrines, have taken possession of our pulpits, from whence they vent their poisonous errors without dismay or controul. With these dissenters it is impossible to live in harmony and friendship, and we are even enjoined not to bid them God speed, nor even to receive them into our house, lest we should be partakers of their sins (*c*).—But whereas I observed before, there is no other dissention than about some trifling modes and ceremonies, there we may still be united in heart and affection, seeing we may be all members of that same mystical body whereof Christ himself is the head. Thus that man is no dangerous dissenter who perhaps scruples to put on a surplice when he prays in public, for he may nevertheless have *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ, and may *pray* with the spirit and with the understanding (*d*): but he is a dangerous dissenter who, whether he wear the surplice or no, is not clothed with that white linen which is the righteousness of the saints (*e*), and who denies that the spirit helpeth our infirmities and teacheth us to pray (*f*). In short, the whole world is di-

(*c*) 2 John x. 11. (*d*) Rom. xiii. 14. Ps. xlvii. 7.

(*e*) Rev. xix. 8. (*f*) Rom. viii. 26.

divided only into two sorts of people, converted and unconverted, the children of God and the children of this world: and at the great day it will not be ask'd whether a man receiv'd the communion sitting or kneeling, nor whether he was baptiz'd sooner or later, by sprinkling or by immersion; but whether the blood of sprinkling was ever applied to his conscience, whether he ever knew what it was spiritually to feed upon Jesus Christ by living faith; and whether he was ever made partaker of the baptism of the Holy Ghost; for in both sacraments "the outward form or visible sign" (as our catechism calls it) can be of no avail without "the inward and spiritual grace," or thing signified.

Mrs. C. I thank you for thus stating the distinction, and cannot help acknowledging the justness of it. But I must still beg leave to mention one or two other matters which I have heard objected against Mr. *Jewel*.

Miss S. Pray Mrs. *Clinker* speak without reserve: I assure you I shall be far from vindicating him in any thing that may appear improper.

Mrs. C. Last night I happened to be playing a pool at Mrs. *Shuffleton's*, with old Mrs. *Honour Cutwell*, Mrs. *Pryabout*, Lady *Wormwood*, and a few other friends, and who should come in but Doctor *Arius Chadman*, and with him the grave and sedate Mr. *Heartwhole*. — During the time of tea, and between the deals, the conversation almost intirely turn'd upon Mr. *Jewel*. Mr. *Heartwhole* said he wondered any body shou'd be so *absurd* as to run after him, and that in general the people of this way were either poor ignorant creatures who knew no better, or else, such as had been very loose and profligate in their morals. Doctor *Chadman* immediately acquiesced in the remark, as did also the whole company, and indeed I was so much struck with the propriety of it, that I gave my hearty approbation to every word which was spoken.

C

Miss S.

Miss S. From the very first ages of the church down to the present period, the same cavils have always been rais'd against the gospel and its faithful ministers, by men of the same character with Doctor *Chadman* and Mr. *Heartwhole*. When God himself was manifest in the flesh, tho' the common people (we read) heard him gladly, yet it was taunted against his disciples "have any of the Rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" and he himself was reproach'd as being a friend of publicans and sinners. But by those very means which man makes use of to pour contempt upon true religion, God does and will get himself the greatest glory, viz. by instructing the most ignorant, and pardoning the most guilty. Had Jesus intended to propagate his gospel by worldly grandeur and worldly wisdom, he never wou'd have appeared on earth as the reputed son of a carpenter, nor have chosen poor illiterate fishermen to be his chief companions, and the principal instruments of accomplishing his great designs, and however these objections may and do prove "as stones of stumbling and rocks of offence, to men who are wise in their own conceits, and righteous in their own eyes;" yet our blessed Lord instead of endeavouring to obviate them, plainly told the self-justifying pharisees, that publicans and harlots wou'd go into the kingdom of heaven before them, that the whole needed not a physician, but those that were sick; and never perhaps did he know an happier hour, (for it is written "that he rejoiced in spirit,") than when he said "I thank thee father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Mrs. C. Pray Miss *Patty* did you ever converse with Parson *Squabble* upon these subjects? I'm persuaded he wou'd soon set you right, if you wou'd but mind what he says.

Miss S.

Miss S. I am no stranger to the real character of *Parson Squabble*. He is as sly a fellow as any in England; there's he and the Rev. Mr. *Guzzle* go every now and then to dine with 'Squire *Gawkey* at *Noodle-hall*, and there they sit and cram themselves up to the throat, and by way of making the 'Squire laugh tell him a parcel of ridiculous lies about methodists, and then they go away and in return laugh at him in their sleeves. And if you have a mind to have any farther insight into good *Parson Squabble's* character, I can assure you that if he was but half as active to save his parishioner's souls as he is to wrangle with them about assessments, he would be one of the best clergymen in the county, but the truth is that poor *Squabble* is much more expert in worrying the sheep, than in feeding them.

Mrs. C. Well, well, may be so. — But I shall now mention a very great oddity that I have heard of Mr. *Jewel*.

Miss S. What is that, Mrs. *Clinker*?

Mrs. C. They tell me that he goes a visiting all about his parish; and that he is scarcely got into an house but he begins about religion. Nor my own part I shou'd be frighten'd to see him come in.

Miss S. If the subject were not too serious my friend's objection wou'd really extort a smile from me. 'Tis true Mr. *Jewel* looks upon it to be his incumbent duty to visit his parishioners, pursuant to the solemn charge he receiv'd from the Bishop for that purpose; and when he *does* visit them, he thinks it wou'd be the highest prostitution of his time and office not to converse with them upon those subjects on which all their happiness both here and hereafter depends; and therefore he is not ashamed to introduce the bible in preference to a pack of cards, or to declare the love and grace of his Saviour, rather than hear or relate all the idle tittle tattle of the town. No, he leaves these things for those who hope to be fav'd by their own virtue and good works, whilst

it is the determination of *his* heart to know nothing *comparatively* among his flock, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

Mrs. C. You may run on as long as you please, Miss, but it is a certain evidence to me, that a person either, wants good breeding, or is a very great enthusiast, who talks so much about religion.

Miss S. That the topic is a most unfashionable one, I very readily allow; and yet the apostle Paul neither fear'd having his politeness call'd in question, or being branded as an enthusiast, when he commanded us to exhort one another *daily*, to have our conversation in heaven; and to let our communication to be *always* to the use of edifying, fit to minister grace unto the hearers(*g*). Now let not my dear Mrs. *Clinker* be angry, if I desire her to examine whether she has not as much liv'd in direct opposition to these divine injunctions, as if there were no such words to be found in the bible.

Mrs. C. I always talk of those things that the rest of my acquaintance talk about; and indeed I am not one of those who are for making a shew of religion, and yet I trust I have as good an heart as those who are always canting, whining, and praying.

Miss S. Though we are call'd upon to pray without ceasing(*h*), which at least means that our hearts shou'd be always in a praying frame, yet I am as much against *canting* and *whining* as you can be: however don't let us call things by wrong names, since these expressions are frequently made use of in order to pour contempt upon every thing that has the least shadow of real piety. And tho' I don't mean to form any worse judgment of your heart than of my own, or of others, yet I never found it recorded in scripture that the heart of any individual is naturally good in the sight of God, but deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked(*i*); and I'm persuaded that

(*g*) Heb. iii. 13. Phil. iii. 20. Eph. iv. 29.

(*h*) 1 Theff. v. 17.

(*i*) Jer. xvii. 9.

that if you cou'd but call to mind every thing that has pass'd in your heart this one day, even when you were engaged in your closet duties, how little you have thought about God and eternity, and how much about the world and yourself, that you wou'd find cause enough for the deepest repentance and humiliation, especially when you reflect who it is that has said, "My son give me thine heart (k)."

Mrs. C. But tho' nobody loves a good play or an innocent game at cards better than *Mrs. Shuffleton*, yet you must certainly allow that she is a very religious woman, for she has prayers in her family night and morning, and gives both money and medicines to many poor sick people, and yet you know how much she spoke against *Mr. Jewel* the other night at *Lady Squeese's*.

Miss S. I believe indeed that there are few who go further in the externals of religion than *Mrs. Shuffleton*; but as soon as her duties are over do they leave any divine flavor upon her heart? Does she seem to make up her happiness in Christ? Is she not as trifling in her conversation, as worldly in her disposition, and is she not delighted with the very same follies and entertainments that amuse the most abandon'd and profane? However admitting all you say of *Mrs. Shuffleton's* devotion, yet we read in the Acts of the Apostles that *devout women*, have before now been instrumental in raising persecutions against the faithful ministers of Christ.

Mrs. C. Mercy on us, *Pat*, why you wou'd condemn all the good people in L——r at this rate.—And positively you make me quite sick; I tell you I am for having every body good, without chattering and making a rout about it.

Miss S. I sincerely join with you in wishing that there was much less *chattering* and *making routs* than there is; but let us remember that light cannot be hid, and that we are not to take a candle and put it under a bushel,

but

but on a candlestick, that all that are in the house may see the light (*l*): now real christians are said to be the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, and are compar'd to cities set on an hill (*m*); sooner therefore can light itself be turned into darkness, sooner can salt lose its flavor; and sooner can an high conspicuous city be invisible to the eyes of the beholder, than a true believer can be unnoticed from the multitude of nominal professors round about him: But is it not strange, that tho' we are creatures of a day, that tho' we have immortal souls within us which must be for ever happy or for ever miserable; that tho' Jesus Christ has vouchsafed to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; yet that the grand subject which most of all concerns us is the only one that is quite kept out of sight. There is time enough to talk about dancing assemblies and card assemblies; who and who made themselves very particular together; who dresses the most genteely; and who makes themselves the most awkward figure; who makes the grandest entertainments, and who gives the most paltry dinners; we can hold forth for hours together about elections, politics, races, deaths, and marriages; and nevertheless if but a single word is dropp'd about Jesus Christ, and the salvation of the soul, silence or disgust is the immediate consequence.

Mrs. C. May be so. But I can never give up the necessity of a prudent compliance with the world.

Miss S. Then it is certain that you must *give up* your bible; but whilst we are in health and spirits, and strangers to any work of grace upon the soul, we can plead as loudly for our favourite indulgences as the scriptures plead against them; but when a severe sickness comes, and lays us upon the bed of languishing, and particularly when death the king of terrors stares us in the face, when anxious friends are weeping all around us, when the silent physician shakes his head, and the fluttering

(*l*) Acts xiii. 50. (*m*) Mat. v. 13, 15.

ing pulse indicates a speedy dissolution; in such an hour, will it be a more comfortable reflection that we have thro' divine grace devoted our *whole* hearts to the Saviour of sinners, or that we have strenuously stood up for the expediency of giving up a part of them to the world and its gratifications?

Mrs. C. O dear, I shall certainly have the vapors — Is'nt it almost nine o'clock, Ma'am?

Miss S. No Ma'am it has not yet struck eight; but give me leave to continue the subject, and to observe that when death and judgment —

Mrs. C. Pray *Patty* let's have done, for I perceive that what *Mrs. Blabington* and *Mrs. Cackleworth* told me the other day is too true—You are irrecoverably gone; however I hope these notions won't make you mopish and melancholy.

Miss S. So far from it Madam that I never knew what solid happiness was till I found it in religion, and whatever prejudices may be taken up against it by those who are strangers to its delights, yet one who had tried every earthly enjoyment affirm'd them to be all vanity and vexation of spirit (*n*); but speaking of religion he says her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace (*o*).

Mrs. C. Indeed *Miss Patty* it's later than you think for, therefore I shall wish you a good night: and I must say that I really believe you mean well; however I hope you won't make yourself so very particular, but will go a little more into the world.

Miss S. Whilst I read such texts in my bible as Be not conformed to this world (*p*). No man can serve two masters (*q*). Whosoever will be my disciple, let him take up his cross daily and deny himself and follow me (*r*). If any man love the world the love of the father is not in him (*s*). She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she

(*n*) Eccl. i. 14. (*o*) Prov. iii. 17. (*p*) Rom. xii. 2. (*q*) Mat. vi. 24.
(*r*) Mat. xvi. 24. (*s*) 1 John ii. 15.

liveth (*t*). Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth (*u*). Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; because wide is the gate and broad is the way which leadeth unto destruction and many there be which go in thereat (*w*); I say, when I read these texts and a thousand more of the like import, I can never believe that a divided heart is a sacrifice with which God will be well pleased.

Mrs. C. I still think that all extremes ought to be avoided; and that it is safest to keep the middle way.

Miss S. We read in scripture, as I was just now observing of a *strait* way to heaven, and a *broad* way to destruction, but we no where here read of a *middle* way; however there is mention made of a *middle state* between hot and cold, and the following is the sentence which the word of inspiration punisheth upon all such as are in that state. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I wou'd thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth (*x*). Here you see as an open enemy is preferable to a pretended friend, so they who are totally careless and indifferent about religion, are much less offensive to God, than such as are for keeping the *middle way* of lukewarmness; the reason of which must appear very clearly to you if you will suffer me to put the sentiments of such persons into the form of a prayer, which we may suppose wou'd run in some such expressions as the following. "O Lord thy word
"requires that I shou'd love thee with all my heart, with
"all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my
"strength (*y*), that I shou'd renounce the world, and
"shou'd present myself as an holy, reasonable and
"lively

(*t*) 1 Tim. v. 6.

(*u*) Col. iii. 2.

(*w*) Mat. vii. 13.

(*x*) Rev. iii. 16.

(*y*) Mark. xii. 33.

“lively sacrifice unto thee (z); but Lord these are
 “such over righteous extremes as I cannot away with;
 “therefore grant that thy love, and a moderate share
 “of the love of this world, may both reign in my
 “heart at once. I ask it for Jesus Christ’s sake Amen.”
 Now my dear Madam if you are shock’d at such a
 petition consider that it is the exact language of your
 own heart, whilst you can plead for what you call the
middle way in religion.

Mrs. C. To be sure religion is not to be neglected,
 yet I am apprehensive lest so much of it shou’d make
 the common people idle.

Miss S. Your objection madam is as old as Pharoah’s
 time, when the oppress’d Israelites requested leave to go
 and sacrifice to the Lord in the wilderness; the language
 of the haughty monarch was, ye are idle! ye are idle (a)!
 therefore ye say let us go and sacrifice to our God (b).
 For my own part I am so far from countenancing idlen-
 ness, that I believe it is as necessary for the common
 people to labour as to pray, and am well persuaded
 that the heart may often be engag’d in the work of
 heaven, whilst the hands are about the necessary busi-
 ness of earth: nor can I maintain a favourable opinion
 of any man as a christian, who makes religion an excuse
 for neglecting his duty in the station wherein God has
 plac’d him, and therefore those two things which the
 apostle joins together, no man ought to put asunder.
 Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving
 the Lord (c).

Mrs. C. I must acknowledge that what you say on
 this point appears reasonable enough, but I have ob-
 serv’d that during our whole conversation you have
 talk’d to me just as if I was a very wicked bad creature.
 —Pray do you make no difference between me and any
 naughty woman who walks the streets.

D

Miss S.

(z) Rom. xii. 1.

(a) Exod. v. 17.

(b) Exod. v. 8.

(c) Rom. xii. 11.

Miss S. That there is a great difference between one sin and another in point of guilt and aggravation, there is no doubt; yet before the law of God I make no difference between the most decent formalist, and the most abandon'd profligate, because the scripture itself makes none, having declar'd in express terms that there is no difference, seeing that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (*d*). Ignorance of this important truth is the destruction of thousands, who instead of comparing themselves with the law, and seeing that the least deviation from it subjects them to the curse, (for sin is the transgression of the law) (*e*) and the wages of sin is death (*f*), are ready to cry out with the pharisee of old, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are (*g*); by this means their souls remain in blindness both as to their disease and as to their remedy; for as nothing gives them greater offence than to be told that they stand upon a level with the very publicans and harlots, and that the pride, enmity, unbelief and self-righteousness of their hearts are perhaps sins of a deeper die than those outward immoralities which they condemn in others, so they will not be persuaded but that God will be much more inclin'd to receive them and to shew them mercy on account of something that they think good in themselves, than he will to receive or shew mercy to those who have gone great lengths in the grossest abominations.

Mrs. C. I can never think myself so bad as you would make me.

Miss S. 'Tis not what I make you, but what the word of God makes you that you ought to attend to: however, if you will but call to mind what you said of yourself last time you went to church and approach'd the Lord's table, you will find that your own mouth condemn'd you much more than I have done; for you then

(*d*) Rom. iii. 23.

(*e*) 1 John iii. 4.

(*f*) Rom. vi. 23.

(*g*) Luke xviii. 11.

then confess'd over and over again that you were a miserable sinner, a lost sheep, that the remembrance of your sins was grievous unto you, and the burden of them intolerable (*h*); and therefore you besought God pitifully to behold the sorrows of your heart; now if you did not feel the truth of these expressions in your inmost soul, whilst you acknowledg'd them with your lips, it is to be fear'd you have only been guilty of a solemn mockery of the most high, and if you did feel the force of them, then it is certain that I have not set you forth in any worse colors than those in which you have painted yourself.

Mrs. C. But I have endeavoured to repent and amend; and upon this account I doubt not but God will be merciful to me.

Miss S. Repentance and amendment are certainly right in their proper place, and no soul shall be sav'd without them; yet it is not on account of these that God will be merciful to any sinner whatever; but only on account of what Jesus has done and suffer'd. Repentance, obedience, and even faith itself are not meritorious causes of our salvation, but they are those gifts and graces which God is pleas'd freely to bestow upon all those whom he has taken into covenant with himself. Besides, suppose you were to be ever so sorry for sin, this sorrow wou'd indeed prove your guilt, but cou'din no wise undo what is past.

Mrs. C. This doctrine is enough to drive one to despair.

Miss S. If it drive you to despair of being sav'd by any thing you have done, or can do, either in whole or in part, it is well; since this is the only way whereby you can be brought to set a due value upon the gospel of Christ; and when you can take him as all your salvation, and can rely upon his promises, then you will find that a sense of your interest in him, and of his par-

doning

(*h*) Communion Service.

doning love shed abroad in the heart, is the very opposite of that gnawing corrosive sensation and anguish of conscience which are properly meant by the word despair.

Mrs. C. Indeed, Miss *Patty*, I can bear it no longer—so once more, good night.

Miss S. Good night, *Mrs. Clinker*; but let me not part with you without one promise.

Mrs. C. What is that?

Miss S. That you will not condemn Mr. *Jewel* upon the report of others; but that you will divest yourself of prejudice, and will go and hear for yourself, at least three times, as it is impossible to form any competent judgment of the general scope of a minister's preaching from one single sermon. Remember that when an Apostle preach'd, some went out contradicting and blaspheming, but others had candour enough to say, "We will hear thee again as to this matter (i):" therefore let me address *Mrs. Clinker* with "Go and do thou likewise:" and if some shou'd be hardy enough to say, "He has a devil and is mad, why hear ye him (k)," I trust you will soon be convinc'd that the words which he speaks are not the words of him that hath a devil.

Mrs. C. But his sermons are so horribly long, and the weather is so cold, that I shall be both tir'd and starv'd to death.

Miss S. When you came from the play last Tuesday evening, you said you were so charm'd that you cou'd have sat all night, and yet you cannot bear to sit one hour to hear the word of God.—'Tis true, a cold sermon and a cold church are neither of them very desirable; and if I had been one of *Parson Droner's* auditors I shou'd willingly have admitted his plea for coming to a speedy conclusion on account of the inclemency of the weather; but I hope when you are at *St. Giles's* you will hear something which will at once command your attention and warm your heart.

Mrs. C.

(i) Acts xvii. 32.

(k) John x. 20.

Mrs. C. For my part, I am well contented with my own parish church.

Miss S. And so shou'd I Madam if I cou'd hear the good old scripture doctrines of our own church constantly preach'd in it; otherwise I can see no such mighty attraction in church walls.—We blame not the hungry beggar who wanders from door to door because he has nothing to eat at home; nor are you yourself surprized when you see the Lawyer *Sipwell*, or your neighbour Mr. *Swillington* making such frequent enquiries where they may find the best tap, surely then——

Mrs. C. What a zealous creature you are to make converts to your own way of thinking?

Miss S. When I see the great zeal of many to promote the service of the world, and to discountenance every appearance of godliness which goes beyond the fashion of the times, instead of fancying that I have any unnecessary degree of zeal for God, I may justly be ashamed of my cowardice, especially when I consider how good a master I serve, and how good a cause I am engaged in — But why does my friend suppose that religion is merely a way of thinking; whereas it is nothing less than a change of state, and a change of nature, and therefore set forth in scripture by the striking expressions of a new birth (l) and a new creation (m).

Mrs. C. [Pulling the bell] I take the liberty Ma'am of ringing the bell for *Sam* to come up, and open the street door.—Good night, Miss *Steady*, good night.

Miss S. Adieu, Mrs. *Clinker*, I heartily wish you well.

(l) John iii. 5.

(m) 2 Cor. 5. 17.

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THE END